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Letter dated 25 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the written statement of the delegation of Greece in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by Mr. Gjorge Ivanov, President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on 25 September 2009, at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly (see annex).

It would be highly appreciated if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 8.

(*Signed*) Anastassis **Mitsialis**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

09-53750 (E) 021009

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Annex to the letter dated 25 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Anastassis Mitsialis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, in exercise of the right of reply to the statement made by H.E. Mr. Gjorge Ivanov, President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

I would like to put the following statement on record in response to the statement made today by the President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, H.E. Mr. Gjorge Ivanov, during the general debate of the United Nations General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session.

The Security Council, by its resolution 817 (1993), recommended, and the General Assembly, by its resolution 47/225, dated 27 April 1993, decided that this country will be provisionally referred to for all purposes within the United Nations as "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", pending settlement of the difference that has arisen over the name of this State.

Furthermore, the Security Council, by its resolution 845 (1993), urged "the parties to continue their efforts under the auspices of the Secretary-General to arrive at a speedy settlement of the remaining issues".

Greece proceeded to the bilateral negotiations pursuant to resolution 845 (1993) and the subsequent interim accord of 1995, concluded among the two parties, with goodwill and a spirit of compromise, wishing to assist in reaching an acceptable solution over the name issue under the auspices of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy.

However, the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has shown during these years an utter disregard for the above-mentioned Security Council resolutions and an intransigent and uncompromising position during bilateral negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, thus preventing any progress therefrom leading to an amicable settlement of the difference between the two countries.

Even within the United Nations, as was the case also today, the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has never used the name by which the two principal organs of the Organization decided that it should be provisionally referred to for all purposes within the United Nations, but, on the contrary, has always used the very name over which the Security Council has acknowledged the existence of a difference between the two countries.

In November 2008, the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia instituted proceedings before the International Court of Justice. This is another attempt by its Government to further obstruct and delay the process of finding a mutually acceptable solution to the difference over its name, despite the recommendations of the above-mentioned Security Council resolutions and the provisions of the 1995 Interim Accord.

At the same time, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continuously violates the letter and the spirit of the Interim Accord, which lays the foundations

for establishing a climate of good-neighbourly relations and understanding between the two countries, pending the definitive settlement of the name issue.

Greece remains firmly committed to the bilateral negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations and to the need for a prompt and acceptable solution to the name issue that would take into consideration the legitimate interests and sensitivities of both countries and would solve a problem which directly affects regional stability. Such a solution could be achieved only if no country attempts to assert exclusivity through the use of the name, thus monopolizing the wider geographic region of Macedonia.

There should be no winners or losers in this effort. A speedy solution to the name issue is in the interest of both countries as well as of regional peace and stability. The Security Council, in its resolution 817 (1993), clearly stipulates that the name issue "needs to be resolved in the interest of the maintenance of peaceful and good-neighbourly relations in the region". Greece stands ready to pursue such a solution.